5/17/72

Dear Mr. Bade,

Your letter of the 1st came just as I had to leave for a period. Herewith I return the Al Donaldson interview with Gerold Frank, who is an unintendedly helpful blabbermouth and whose book, you can be sure, the Carnegie library does have. After all, it is advertised. This, to people of that intellectual competence, makes it as legitimate as thalidimide. And about as good, in my view.

But if you are interested in pursuing this with Rachel George and what I think would be futile, attempting to open her mind a bit, may I make two suggestions?

Check their list and see if there is any of the works of sycophancy missing. I'll bet they have every one.

And tell her that among the many publishers who declined WHITEWASH in manuscript is Dell (and Dial, subsidiary, who between them rejected three times). When it became a success in the underground format, Dell came to me, didn't even edit out the reflection on itself, had a first reprint of 250,000 copies and then reprinted twice in the first month. She might appraise her own "judgement" about "commercial" acceptability from this certainly commercial enough history.

However, I think anything you might try is likely to be a total waste of time. The intellectuals, on this subject, are those most anti-intellectual, and nothing will persuade her, for despite anything she might tell you, here is a political decision. WHITEWASH was a best seller in both forms, for six months as a reprint. It was favorably reported in what every librarian gets, Publishers' Weekly. She was not without knowledge. She gets Dell's advertising, and for six months they had it as their only best-selling non-fiction. Monthly this appeared in the New York Times or their mailings for that entire period.

The Bynum Shaw piece would be suited for toilet paper if Esquire used different stock. Thanks for the offer, but I don't even want a duplicate. Only such crap receives editorial welcome on political assassinations.

Like other publications, Esquire has its own cop-outs, and the book is as valueless as the original Epstein. And "#49" is not my "theory". I had then advanced none. Does it take any more to make Epstein commercially acceptable, or publishable in Esquire? But thanks for the offer. And Epstein not only never asked me, but each of the requests he had to appear with me he turned down. He wouldn't even face me by phone when he further misrepresented what I had written during a radio appearance in Washington. Nor did he deny the broadcast charge that he had misrepresented and that the misrepresentation could not have been accidental. To the best of my knowledge, since I phoned this one station when he was in its studio, and despite the promotion behind his subsequent writing, he has not made a single appearance in Washington. Thus I think we can depend on Rachel George not finding his work of "doubtful validity".

Gerold Frank is one of the more pious and persuasive liars. His lies, like his blabbing, can be helpful. If you see anything else by or about him, I would appreciate a copy. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg